

**“The Ashes from the Altar”**  
Leviticus 6:8-13

Introduction: Leviticus tells New Testament Christians how to appreciate holiness and appropriate it into their everyday lives. The word holy is used 94 times in Leviticus, and words connected with cleansing are used 71 times. References to uncleanness number 128. There’s no question what this book is all about. The Book of Leviticus explains five basic themes that relate to the life of holiness: a holy God; a holy priesthood; a holy people; a holy land; and a holy Savior. Happiness, not holiness, is the chief pursuit of most people today, including many professed Christians. They want Jesus to solve their problems and carry their burdens, but they don’t want Him to control their lives and change their character. It doesn’t disturb them that God said to His people, “Be ye holy; for I am holy”. Notice what we are to do about holiness.

1. We are to Produce Holiness Romans 6:22- *“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”*
2. We are to Perfect Holiness 2 Corinthians 7:1- *“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”*
3. We are to Pursue Holiness Hebrews 12:14- *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:”*

Body: The first seven chapters of Leviticus are concerned with the various offerings the Hebrew people were to bring to God to maintain holiness. Leviticus chapters one through five deal with five offerings and then chapters six and seven repeats those offerings. Our Lord delights in the details, because those details refer to the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. The particulars were given meticulously. We tend to overlook these passages because the sacrifices are obsolete and are a long time ago. However, they bring to light many truths concerning the cross of Christ. Notice how these offerings are divided up:

1. Commitment to God
    - a. The Burnt Sacrifice Leviticus 1, 6:8-13
    - b. The Meat Offering Leviticus 2, 6:14-18
  2. Communion with God
    - a. The Peace Offering Leviticus 3, 7:11-34
  3. Cleansing from God
    - a. The Sin Offering Leviticus 4, 6:24-30
    - b. The Trespass Offering Leviticus 5, 7:1-10
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1. To Maintain Fellowship with God
    - a. The Burnt Sacrifice Leviticus 1, 6:8-13
    - b. The Meat Offering Leviticus 2, 6:14-18
    - c. The Peace Offering Leviticus 3, 7:11-34
  2. To Restore Fellowship with God
    - a. The Sin Offering Leviticus 4, 6:24-30
    - b. The Trespass Offering Leviticus 5, 7:1-10

- The burnt sacrifice and the sin offering had special regulations concerning the ashes from the altar. Leviticus 1:16, 4:12, 6:10, 6:11. Let us take a closer look regarding them.

I. The Method for the Ashes

A. Concerning the Burnt Sacrifice

1. The burnt sacrifice had to be a male from the herd (1:3), the flock (1:10), or a fowl (1:14).
2. The Israelite had to bring the sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle, where a fire was constantly burning on a brazen altar. (6:13)
3. The priest examined the sacrifice to make sure it was without blemish.
4. Except when birds were sacrificed, the Israelite laid a hand on the sacrifice. (1:4)
5. The offerer then killed the animal, and the priest caught the blood in a basin and sprinkled the blood on the sides of the altar. (1:5, 1:11)
6. The priest, not the offerer, killed the bird and its blood was drained out on the side of the altar, and its body burned in the fire on the altar. (1:14-17)
7. The dead body of the bull, lamb, or goat was dismembered, and the parts washed. Then all of it but the hide was laid in order on the wood.
8. The hide was given to the priest. (7:8)

B. Concerning the Sin Offering

1. The sin offering had to be brought to the Lord no matter who the sinner was (4:4).
2. If the high priest sinned, he had to bring a young bullock (4:1-12). If the whole congregation sinned, they also had to bring a bullock (4:13-22). A ruler brought a male kid of the goats (4:22-26), while one of the common people brought a female kid of the goats or a female lamb (4:27-35). A poor person could bring a dove or a pigeon, and a very poor person could bring a non-bloody sacrifice of fine flour (5:7-13).
3. Whatever animal was brought, the offender had to identify with the sacrifice by laying hands on it. (1:4, 3:2, 3:8, 3:13, 4:4, 4:24, 4:29, 4:33)
4. The animal was slain, and the blood presented to God.

II. The Maintenance of the Ashes Exodus 27:3- *“And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass.”*

A. Read the context of Exodus 27:1-8

B. In describing the Altar of Shittim wood, instruments are made to maintain the ashes.

III. The Meaning of the Ashes

- A. The law of the burnt sacrifice was concerned with two added details, with the fire and with the ashes. The fire was to never go out. Leviticus 6:13
- B. This reminds us that God’s wrath against sin is as fierce today as it was when it kindled the lake of fire. The crime of Calvary has heated it seven times hotter than before. It will never go out. That is a terrible truth, but it is consistent with the holiness of God.
- C. The law of the burnt offering was also concerned with the ashes.

- D. With the sacrifices that involved the shedding of blood, the laying on of hands meant the worshiper was symbolically transferring sin and guilt to the animal who died in the place of the sinner. Leviticus 1:4
- E. After the fire had burned all night, consuming the burnt offering, the priest approached the brazen altar in fine linen. Leviticus 6:8-10
- F. He reverently collected the ashes and carried them outside the camp to a clean place. Leviticus 6:11
- G. The ashes remind us of a great truth.
- H. We can stir a smoldering fire and get sparks and blow upon the embers and bring back the fire and, with fresh fuel, again have roaring flames.
- I. But we can stir ashes forever and get nothing. There is nothing left to burn. This tells us that it is impossible to stir God's wrath against the believer.
- J. The sacrificial work of Christ is complete, His substitutionary work so effective, that nothing can ever rekindle God's wrath again.
- K. 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10- *"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."*
- L. By the authority of God's Word, our sins are gone, never to be stirred up again!
- M. Romans 4:7- *"Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."*
- N. Colossians 2:13- *"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;"*
- O. 1 John 2:12- *"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake."*
- P. Hebrews 8:12- *"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."*
- Q. Isaiah 43:25- *"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."*
- R. Revelation 1:5- *"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"*
- S. Years ago a fire was sweeping across the prairie, driven by the wind. A man and his family stood in its path. The man kindled a fire at his feet. It took hold and, driven, by the wind, burned out a swath of the grass. "Come and stand where the fire has been," the man said. The family did so, and the approaching holocaust passed them by. There was nothing left there to burn.

Conclusion: What a tremendous truth for the child of God. That is where the believer stands—where the fire has been. His salvation is assured because his sins are gone forever! What about you? Are your sins gone? John 8:20-24